

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 13, 2005

CONTACT: MARIL E. ALSUP
Public Affairs Specialist
(413) 253-4314 or
maril.alsup@ma.usda.gov

Federal, State & Local Officials Mark USDA Rural Development's 70th Anniversary With Funds for Sturbridge

Sturbridge, MA – Town Administrator, Jim Malloy graciously welcomed a visit from USDA Rural Development State Director, David Tuttle, State Senator Stephen Brewer and Representative Todd Smola today at the site of Sturbridge's new water supply well on Shattuck Road. The government officials came bearing a check made out to the Town for over \$2.8 million.

The funds will be used by the town to construct a new drinking water supply which will replace the capacity lost when one of the town's wells was deemed contaminated by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MADEP). MADEP ruled that the towns' Well Number One may only be used for emergency drinking water needs. The USDA Rural Development project will finance the development of a new well source, pump station, and infrastructure accessories which will essentially make up the capacity lost by the inactivity of the contaminated well.

"I am happy the Town of Sturbridge is receiving such generous funding to improve water services for its residents, said Senator Brewer. "I am pleased that USDA Rural Development could assist the town in the much needed rehabilitation of its water system."

In February 2003, USDA Rural Development provided \$1,962,000 in funds to finance the first stage of construction on a new sanitary sewer system around Big Alum Pond and in August 2003, the agency awarded Sturbridge with nearly \$1.9 million to complete construction on the sewer upgrade. Today's funding announcement brings USDA Rural Development's investment into the community's water and wastewater systems to over \$6.6 million.

"I am grateful for the guidance of USDA State Director David Tuttle and for this investment in Sturbridge," said Representative Smola. "I applaud Town Administrator James Malloy, the Board of Selectmen, and the federal government for taking action to protect our drinking water supply."

-MORE-

“I find it very appropriate that we’re celebrating USDA Rural Development’s 70th anniversary here in Sturbridge today,” said State Director, David Tuttle. “We’ve had a great relationship with this community and its leaders over the years and we’re committed to making sure that a sound infrastructure is in place here so that Sturbridge can grow and prosper.”

Today’s funding announcement in Sturbridge coincides with USDA Rural Development’s 70th Anniversary of service to the nation. Concerned initially with emergency relief during the crisis of the Great Depression, the Resettlement Administration made small loans to help farmers get through tough times, built and managed migrant worker camps, constructed rural water projects, purchased land for conservation purposes, resettled displaced farmers on new land and even built entire model communities from the ground up. Later, out of this eclectic mix of programs, grew the Farm Security Administration, the Farmer’s Home Administration, and today’s USDA Rural Development.

USDA Rural Development invested over \$50 million in Massachusetts in Fiscal Year 2004 to provide equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure.

###